

The Times Dispatch

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1913.

DEMOCRATIC TRUST LEGISLATION.

The spectacle of the Telephone Trust hurrying to dissolve itself is the best illustration the country has had of the new spirit in national politics; the methods by which this action was precipitated afford a commentary no less striking on the character of the administration.

We can almost measure the presidents of recent years by their attitude toward the trusts. Contrast them for a moment. Roosevelt, the boastful, threatened vengeance on any combine that dared infringe on the sacred provisions of the Sherman antitrust law. Yet he gave acquiescence to the famous Tennessee Coal and Iron transfer and found no better way to punish the trusts than to bring on a panic. His successor, good easy man, had a judicial trend of mind and fought the trusts only in the courts. The result was a long series of suits, centring about Mr. Wickenden and ending in the remarkable Standard Oil and the American Tobacco decisions.

To say that Mr. Taft did as little as did Mr. Roosevelt to curb the trusts would be unjust, but that he really aided in the solution of the problem is doubtful. Now comes Mr. Wilson, who convinces the combines that he stands ready to redeem the pledges of his party, and will restore competition.

Without the bluster of Roosevelt or the studied judicial procedure of Taft, he seems already to be winning victories.

It is as yet too early to forecast Mr. Wilson's detailed policy on this subject. Those forecasts which have been printed may or may not be authoritative, and in any event are too general in outline to warrant criticism. But if his attitude toward the Telephone Trust is indicative of his plan, Mr. Wilson contemplates remedial legislation accompanied by considerate compromise.

We do not believe he will countenance drastic antitrust laws such as will place the Sugar Trust and the United States Steel Company on the same basis; nor do we believe he will precipitate legislation which will mean inevitable disaster to business. But he is in earnest. This is half the battle.

FOR THE HONOR OF THE LAND.

When an American interviewer recently visited Kipling at his English country place, he was shown a mason digging as far down as five feet for a granite foundation for a wall. "Do you see how substantiated his claim that," asked Kipling, "that should be interesting to an American, who is used to seeing things done in a hurry. Just here in Sussex they build for the ages." Thus here I asked a man why he placed so much labor and I asked him why he went so far down for his foundation when two or three feet would do, and they both made the same answer—please note that I have learned to be a Londoner in the Sussex. "It's an edge of a mortal. We do it this way," he said for the honor of the land.

The phrase embodies a fine principle of patriotism. It displays not only a deference to the nourishing earth, but to the sweet, rural soil of the man who has the interest of his country at heart. He is the first patriot who builds deeply and builds well, not for his days alone, but for posterity. He seeks to lay enduring the foundations of stable government and base upon it a structure of truth and justice that shall serve the uplifted generations of the future.

President Wilson is to deny himself to visitors at Pans Christian, and the nation should be sorry. The time server, the courtier of neutrals and the demagogue do not so build. They undermine, destroy little faith in democratic principles. It was "the old home of the land," that the framers of the American Constitution, the fathers reared this government. Like the heroes of Sussex, the founders sleep and stand firm despite assault. The subversives like Kipling, after their sleep, wait to strike a blow for liberty.

They who would destroy the independence of the judiciary through the recall of judges in the United States are our most venomous opponents those who construct "the home of the land." They would subvert and for rock and stability to subdue. They would abolish the principle of permanency. They would subvert the eternal rules of justice to the passing width of a plumb line. They would solve turpitudes and misdeeds in administration of justice a gnat's eye. Their excavation for government would be deep enough to cover the world.

The forecast for Christmas gives Virginia a week crimson with roses, blue with violet green with velvet grass and radiant with the smiles of the loveliest women in the world.

Several slices of vigorous onion will impart to eggplant a novel flavor.

Yes, Dore, we hope you not for Christmas a chichiadoon-dee-oo-poo-vegpetrolyphen. That's Indian for a motor car, or, at least, that's what a Tennessean told us.

CONQUERING CANCER.

We trust that our readers will not misunderstand the press reports that Dr. Howard A. Kelly, of Baltimore, has declared radium to be a cure for cancer.

It is true that Dr. Kelly, a gynecologist of international repute, has made a very encouraging report of his success with radium. But what Dr. Kelly really said is far different from what sensationalists have alleged. With that scientific caution for which he is proverbial, Dr. Kelly recently expressed his conviction that superficial cancers can promptly be cured with radium, but he did not suggest or even intimated that a carcinoma or sarcoma could as yet be cured in the same way.

Between these types of cancers there is a vast difference. The skin cancer, epithelioma, has never been as dangerous or as difficult to treat as the internal cancers, the sarcomas and the carcinomas. Even before Roentgen rays were discovered, prompt surgical operations permanently cured many skin cancers, and since that time, these growths have lost most of their horrors. Dr. Kelly's announcement of the success that follows the use of radium is but another, and we hope, the final step in the conquest of skin cancers.

But the internal cancers, or a majority of them, still resist the efforts of scientists. Experience has shown that if the victim submit to an operation at the hands of a good surgeon, as soon as the diagnosis is made, he has an excellent chance of complete recovery and is certain to have his life greatly prolonged.

Beyond this, science has not yet gone, but daily it is nearer the secret. This may seem strange when one remembers that even the cause of cancer is still in doubt, but true it is. Convincing that unless they find the cause and the remedy, the disease will become a serious menace to the race, pathologists are studying cancer in all the great laboratories. They have made many important discoveries; they have solved many mysteries; to-day they stand just without the door of full knowledge. To-morrow, it may be, that door will be opened.

THE SEED OF HEROISM.

Stallard Edwards lay in his hospital bed in Terre Haute Sunday wishing that he might die. He is a coal miner, who sustained the loss of a leg and other injuries in an accident. He was bemoaning his luck when a hospital visitor, to divert him, told him of Helen Keller, who was in the city lecturing.

He was told of this brave little woman who, deaf, dumb and blind after her first nineteen months of life, has largely overcome these obstacles by learning to read and write, to use the finger alphabet, and finally to speak and to perceive keenly through the eyes of her mind the world about her. He was told of her steady progress through lower schools to her college degree at Radcliffe. He was told of her service to humanity in her interpretation of the sensations and aspirations of those who cannot hear, who cannot speak, who cannot see, and her endeavors to help and cheer each stricken one.

When the miner had heard the story of this courageous battle against almost insuperable odds, he said, "Well, if that deaf, dumb and blind girl can do so much for herself and others, you bet I'll find a way to get along."

The incident was related to Miss Keller, and she forthwith wrote to the offering miner this note: "To the man in the Hospital who must begin life over again heavily handicapped, Your friend, Helen Keller" and inclosed a gift.

Yet the man's greater compensation came in the inspiration from this heroic career. The incident is illustrative of the power of heroic example. We build remedies to live or die heroically mainly upon the influence of the bright records of the brave of earth. The lesson is truly courageous lights the path of men and nerves them to the high need, whether they battle in war's red wrath or fight in peace.

BORROWED CHILDREN FOR CHRISTMAS.

You can believe it if you will. You can accept as correct the report that childless parents in Philadelphia have taken children from the orphanages "to provide a genuine Christmas for the youngsters now dependent upon the numerous organizations." That is a partial explanation of the fact that automobiles are stopping in front of the asylums and are carrying children to be "brought" this week in the names of the rich.

But for our part, we believe those women are taking the little orphans with them not to make the children happy, but to make their own Christmas bright. For what is Christmas without children in the house? You rise up at the accustomed hour, dress your presents to the servants, read the paper—and yawn because Christmas is a holiday.

But if you are a parent, the excitement of the season culminates in thrills that make you young again. After you have snuggled in the presents from the neighbor's and have brought the little hobby-horse from its hiding-place beneath the stars, you tiptoe into their room when the fire has burned low and place the gifts where they cannot escape the first glance of anxious eyes. And if, while you are filling the stockings, one of the little ones turns in his sleep, you start as though you were the Saint overtaken at his kindly work. Then, before the first light blurs the darkened window, you awake at the sound of the children's voices. And surely, when you hurry into the room to see their joy, you are as happy as they!

What is the difference between the home where there are no children at Christmas and the one where a little stocking hangs by the chimney? They are as far apart as dryness and sparkling verse, as dissimilar as trusting faith and listless knowledge.

We suspect those Philadelphia society-women know it. They have felt it as they have whizzed by in their limousines and have watched the crowds in the street. In the night hours, when mothers have nursed their babies or have watched their children slumber, these childless women have had but little yearning and have wished for a little cot beside their bed. And when they have listened to children chatter of old Santa Claus, they have forecasted the dismal dawn of the holy day unheralded in their homes by youthful cries of joy.

No wonder they seek to counteract the idea they may not know—God help them, poor women, denied the bliss of loving.

The man who made the calendar last week crimson with roses, blue with violet green with velvet grass and radiant with the smiles of the loveliest women in the world.

The magazine-reading public is in danger of anoxia. One of these popular publications this month has three really funny stories in it.

Madame Thébaud, of Paris, predicts the usual number of blasters for 1914, but the old girl is a calamity hawker of calamities that never come.

"Why the lengthy name of the poet?" asks an exchange. "Well, he can't cut his hair himself, and the prints of poetry will not enable him to hire anybody else to do it."

WISE ALEXANDRIANS.

These loyal citizens of Alexandria who refused to be led astray by the proposal to "secede" from Virginia and to unite again with the District of Columbia are now laughing at the expense of their less far-seeing brethren. The Alexandria Gazette in a recent article gives the reason for this mirth, and, incidentally, explains the whole course of "retrocession fever" as it calls the movement to test the validity of the act returning Alexandria to the Old Dominion.

We had thought and intimated at the time of the discussion, that this movement was fostered by Washington real estate dealers, who saw in the flats along the Potomac vast possibilities for development were Congress to annex that territory to the pampered District. But the Gazette explains the "fever" as due to a different cause, namely, a desire to escape taxation.

The advocates of retrocession, it declares, argued that a return to the Federal domain would result in a lower rate of taxation, due to the assistance given by the District of Columbia.

And this, we are advised, is the reason the wise and loyal Alexandrians are smirking. They have read the bill now before Congress, by which it is proposed to make the city of Washington dependent on its own resources, and they are congratulating themselves that Alexandria will escape the heavier taxes, which will fall on the District in case this bill is enacted into law.

They claim, and with good reason, that taxes in Alexandria will be far lower than in Washington, should the District be weaned from the Federal treasury.

The incident related above was recalled by some of Stanton's older citizens by a paragraph in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, column "Fifty Years Ago To-Day," worded as follows:

"E. Coffman, who was tried by a court-martial at Lynchburg for piloting and assisting Confederate soldiers to escape and with communicating information to the enemy, ultimately saved the man's life, as during his incarceration here Hunter's men, under Capt. John C. Coffman, was sent to Lynchburg two years ago yesterday, but when released by Hunter's men after postscript execution by order of the president, he was found to be

"...because of the appeal of his lawyers he made a flippant remark to the few Confederate soldiers who were about and depended on him that day, that so far as known Coffman has been seen in this section of the country, and it is supposed that he went West."

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